

BODY FLUID EVALUATION (CLINICAL MICROSCOPY)

A. SPECIMEN COLLECTION:

1. Samples of cerebrospinal (CSF), pleural, pericardial, peritoneal, and synovial fluid will be accepted. A minimum volume of one (1) ml is required.
2. A brief clinical history should be provided.
3. Submit specimens to the laboratory immediately after collection from the patient to avoid degeneration of cellular elements and possible clot formation.

B. TEST MENU AND NORMAL RANGES

1. CSF: Cerebrospinal fluid is usually collected in three sterile screw cap tubes found in spinal sets. NO ANTICOAGULANT. Collect a minimum of 3 ml in each tube and label the tubes 1,2, and 3 in order of collection. Submit tube 1 to Chemistry, tube 2 to Microbiology, and tube 3 to Hematology. Bring to the laboratory immediately.
 - a. Normal Ranges:
 - (1) Appearance: Clear and colorless
 - (2) Cell count:
 - Adults: 0-5 WBC/CUMM
 - < 1 Year: 0-30 WBC/CUMM
 - 1-4 Years: 0-20 WBC/CUMM
 - 5 Year – Puberty: 0-10 WBC/CUMM
 - b. Differential: Differential cell count is performed if WBC cell count is low, a smear is prepared using the cytoteck centrifuge. If the cell count is high, a smear is prepared from undiluted specimen. A minimum of 100 cells is counted in all cases.
2. Pleural, pericardial and peritoneal fluid: Collect in a syringe with heparin and transfer to purple top
 - a. Normal Ranges:
 - (1) Appearance Clear and pale yellow